

THE PROGRESSIVE FARMER.

THE INDUSTRIAL AND EDUCATIONAL INTERESTS OF OUR PEOPLE PARAMOUNT TO ALL OTHER CONSIDERATIONS OF STATE POLICY.

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AGRICULTURE

RAISING BEEF CATTLE.

A Caswell Farmer Sends a Helpful and Readable Letter Describing His Own Experience.

Editor of The Progressive Farmer:

I will give a little experience that I have had in raising and handling beef cattle in this part of the State.

About five years ago I began to buy up and graze cattle to sell to the local butchers, and for the first year bought such cattle as could be had in the country around here, principally dry milch cows, steers, and anything that the people had to sell. After trying the grown cattle, found that they did not pay. It took too much time and pasture to get them in shape to sell, and they were too cheap on the market at two and a half and three cents, gross, and very often the best of them would not bring as much as I paid for them before grazing them.

Then I bought up calves and yearlings and would keep them through the winter and graze them on our native grasses the next spring and summer. I found no trouble to grow from fifty to one hundred per cent on these young animals, and by so doing sold them at a fair profit the following fall, either to the local butcher or to some stock men to take to the grazing sections of Virginia.

Now in selling these cattle to men who were used to the cattle business is right where I began to have some practical experience in beef cattle, for I could easily see that these people knew what they were doing. They would give more for a calf that suited them than they would for a steer that was about ready for the market here. Say the calf was worth here from three to five dollars and the steer would sell on the market for ten or fifteen dollars. Now I asked these people why this great difference. They said the calf had some signs of Shorthorn blood and they could take them home and after feeding them through the winter and grazing them the next summer, the calf would take on more flesh than the steer would, and that it would sell for a higher price. This was five or six years ago and I, never having given any attention to raising beef cattle, did not know the marked difference; in fact, had never seen any beef cattle except a few Shorthorns, and these at fairs, though I had been through Texas and seen the cattle

there, which as a general thing were only a degree better than ours here.

So I thought the best thing for me to do was to look around and post myself. At that time there were no beef cattle, or cattle men anywhere in this part of this State or Virginia. So I wrote my friend, Capt. J. H. Wissler, of Wythe County, Va., and asked him to tell me something about the beef cattle, and if he could get me some to bring here for breeding. He wrote me that if I were going to engage in raising beef cattle, to come out there; it would pay me to do so. I took this advice and went to Wythe.

The first cattle I saw there were one hundred head of North Carolina cattle that had been wintered there, and grazed in a field set with orchard grass. These cattle were perfectly fat, and I thought as good beef as any and would sell as well as any; but the people said not; said they were no good. I asked why. They said they would weigh only 600 or 700 pounds, and would bring only 2½ cents on the market. These cattle were from two to five years old and very fat. Then I went to a field that had Shorthorn steers two years old, coming three, to be sold that fall. This was a revelation to me, these tall, long, round-bodied cattle weighing about 900 pounds and selling then for 4½ cents gross. Now I could see the difference between scrub and beef cattle. I came home determined, to get some Shorthorn cattle, and after writing around could hear of only one, and that was owned by some member of the A. & M. College at Raleigh, and I failed to get that, but afterwards bought a very fine one that had been brought to Danville by a butcher, and sold in the country to a farmer on Dan River. Now I have some fine heifers bred from scrub cows by this bull. These grade Shorthorn calves would sell anywhere to stock men for grazers at a good price, as they have both the color and shape of the Shorthorn.

I have recently been back to Southwest Virginia, and find a greater variety of beef cattle. They now have both the Herefords and the Angus, all very fine cattle, but the Shorthorns are still holding their own, and in some respects are better to raise, especially to breed up a herd of grades, than perhaps any of the other breeds.

I have tried to induce the farmers to breed up their cattle; have four

bulls out in different sections. While I have made some success in this line, I find it hard to get tobacco farmers to do much with grass and cattle. Yet I am sure they would do better than they have, and are doing, if they would devote more time to grass and stock and less to tobacco.

Now, Mr. Editor, let me make this suggestion: If you will look into the history of any tobacco-growing section, town, or people, where they have made tobacco a specialty, it has in the end been disastrous to all, with a few, very few, exceptions. Eastern North Carolina is taking her first dose now, but not her last. If the people there persist in raising tobacco they will raise it at three dollars per cwt. We in this old tobacco-growing section have done so, and they will so the same. I have been on the market at times when it was hard to find a pile of tobacco that brought as much as 3 cents a pound, and nobody thought anything strange about it, and the buyers said then tobacco was too high in price to buy.

W. G. SMITH.

Caswell Co., N. C.

The Lesson of the Tobacco Panic.

The good business judgment of the country is that the tobacco growing belt will not suffer absolute bankruptcy because of the exactions of the American Tobacco Company. The public is coming to believe (and what better tonic than a belief that a brighter day is coming?) that tobacco will rise to a price above the cost of production, so that when at the close of the year our farmer friends come to add up profit and loss, they will find the former to much exceed the latter on the whole transaction. It is believed also that some good and very valuable lessons will be learned from the experiences of this year. If we shall learn enough from trust methods to distrust the support and aid they give, to not depend on Chicago meat packers to furnish the meat, or raisers of timothy, etc., in different parts of the country to supply feed, along with the great corn farms of the West and Middle West for our teams, in a word, raise on the farm what is needed there, we shall profit immensely by the severe scare we have had this year. This is old doctrine many times preached by the wise men of the country, and those men who have practiced it are in no fear of the sheriff at this time, the poor tobacco crop, the trust and many other

things to the contrary notwithstanding. We have no love for the trust. We readily credit them with the most perfect and single minded purpose to get all they can for the least money, in fact others known as "trust busters" are of the same mind. The business management of the country some time ago adopted in practice the well worn rule, "each man for himself and the devil take the hindmost." The sooner farmers, mechanics, carpenters and all the professions learn this and act accordingly the better it will be for them. The way to do this is to have the means of subsistence, aye for a long seige, at our command, and our farmer friends are in a position to do this better than any other class. We sympathize with them; we hope great and good results from the organization they have perfected, but have not hesitated to say much present trouble might have been saved by a closer adherence to Dossey Battle's old rule: "More hog and hominy."—Rocky Mount Motor.

Fertilizer for Crimson Clover.

Editor of The Progressive Farmer:

Please publish in your next issue answers to these questions:

1. Will 1,600 pounds acid phosphate and 400 pounds muriate of potash make the best fertilizer for crimson clover sown on sandy loam, such as is good tobacco land?
2. How much should be applied per acre?
3. When is the best time to apply fertilizer to clover?

G. M. BEAVERS.

Wake Co., N. C.

(Answer by Dr. B. W. Kilgore, State Chemist.)

In reply to the above questions regarding a fertilizer for crimson clover, I would suggest the use of about 225 pounds per acre of the following mixture:

Acid Phosphate 200 lbs.
Muriate of Potash 25 lbs.
thoroughly mixed and broadcasted just before or after sowing the seed. The seed and fertilizer may be cultivated in at the same time.

Chicago will be 100 years old September 26, and plans are being made for a celebration which will be a record breaker. One feature of the celebration will be a reproduction of the great fire of 1871. All the buildings now in the area covered by the conflagration will be ablaze with red fire.